

Bruce Breedt

I was born on the 4th of March 1966 in a town called Randfontein situated in the North West province of South Africa, a gold mining region. My birth names are Victor Bruce but since I shared names with my dad, I became known my second name. Growing up as a son of a quantity and land surveyor working on mining and civil construction projects, we relocated three times in my primary school years. First to Windhoek in Namibia, then back to South Africa to a town called Ermelo in the Eastern Highveld of the South Africa, and finally settling back to the North West, a gold mining and maize farming region, to a town called Klerksdorp. Here I completed my High school years in 1983 and studied to be an industrial technology teacher at the University of Potchefstroom (now known as the University of the North West), graduating in 1987. This was followed by a two year conscription in the South African defence force, something that was compulsory for all young white males at the time.



From 1990 to 1996 I followed my chosen career as a teacher, when by chance got the opportunity to join the timber department of the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) as a standards writer. The SABS at the time was a fully government funded institution structured in such a way that it included not only standards development, but also laboratory services and third party product certification and inspections. This meant at times when I was not kept busy maintaining and developing timber standards, that I had to occupy my time assisting in either the timber laboratory or on product certification inspections and audits with my lab and certification colleagues. The exposure allowed me to take up the position as principal auditor and technical specialist at the SABS timber certification department in 2004, which at that time had become a fully commercial subsidiary no longer funded by government. Timber product certification is mainly focused on structural timber and preservative treated timber and poles, but also includes products such as wooden doors, wood-based panels, etc. and even lump-charcoal and charcoal briquettes.



In 2009 the position of Executive Director of the South African Wood Preservers Association (SAWPA) became vacant when my predecessor, Mr Angus Currie, known to many IRG members, retired. I applied for the position and as they say the rest is history. Soon after my appointment I became a member of the IRGWP, and attending each IRG meeting since

New Zealand in 2011. This has made it possible for me meet so many people from around the world and am starting to feel like one of the IRG family.

My role as ED of SAWPA, and industry body to the timber treaters as well as preservative chemical companies, is mainly that of promoting the industry, educating and informing end users, both general public and contactors or specifiers, but further includes being a facilitator and

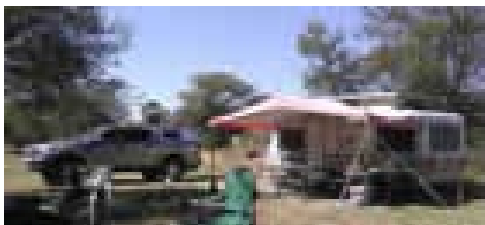


spokesperson for the members of SAWPA at different forums including government, standards development etc. I am currently the chairman of the national technical committee on timber preservation and still take a very active part in maintaining and developing South African National Standards (SANS) in the field of timber preservation.

On my personal life, I am married to Hendrien, a teacher by profession, but also qualified in financial accounting. We met in April 1989, during the second year of military service when I was based in the then South West Africa (Namibia). We have been married for 24 years and have a son aged 13 named Victor who, as you can see, arrived quite a few years after we got married in May 1992. At 13 he has already surpassed his mom in height and his shoe size is the same as mine. Not sure where this will end? We live in Centurion, a city on the border of Pretoria and about 45 km's from my office in Johannesburg.



We have three dogs, two who was rescued from the SPCA, and one adopted from a family who located to New Zealand. We love camping and spend most of our summer holidays camping in the bushveld region of South Africa. We camp mostly in a caravan (mainly for the convenience and comfort) towed by a "bakkie" (common South African name for utility vehicle), but also make use of tents. We enjoy the outdoors and wild life, spending time with family and friends, around a camp fire with good red wine, mountain biking, taking walks in the bush.



My main passion however is playing what is for me the most mentally challenging, frustrating but also most rewarding sport in the world, i.e. golf. I play at least once every weekend and visit the practice range as many times a week as possible. This does in no way mean I'm a good golfer and my current handicap of 16 supports that. My wife loves road running and says she'll start playing golf when she's old enough. Note, she is two years older than me. I've tried the running thing but can honestly say it's not for me, and I am a firm believer that people who run only cause panic☺☺☺.



As most of you who attended the meeting in Lisbon know by now, South Africa will be hosting the IRG49 in Johannesburg, Sandton in 2018. We look forward to hosting you all, and I will surely be at the IRG48 in Ghent, Belgium in June 2017 to tell you more.

